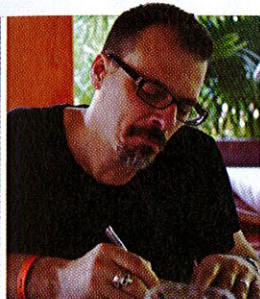


JOHN JOSEPH, THE BOY WHOSE LAST NAME IS A FIRST NAME

Graphic Story



Written by Joe Ollmann

Born on a Christmas tree farm near Hamilton, Ontario, Joe Ollmann was raised by two nice parents with five older siblings. He now resides in Montreal, Quebec, drawing comics and wishing he had studied French more in school. Oh yeah—he also had his own pony when he was a kid.

Tips

panel: a framed section of a graphic story

narrative box: a box in a panel that includes text that is not dialogue; in this graphic story, the narrative boxes contain the thoughts of the main character, John Joseph

flashback: a literary device in which the plot is interrupted by an event or incident from an earlier time; the story goes back in time

caricature: an illustration or description of a person or thing in which certain qualities are exaggerated to create a comic effect

vocal inflection: changing the tone, pitch, or volume of your voice

Before

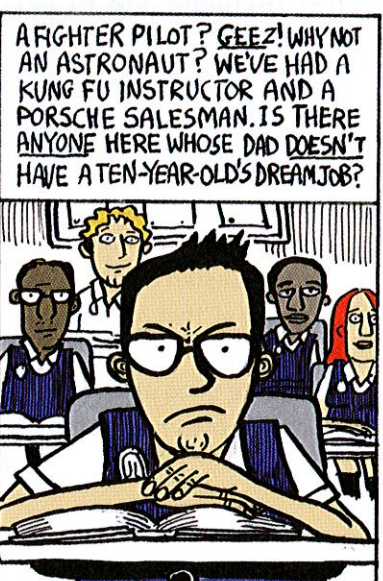
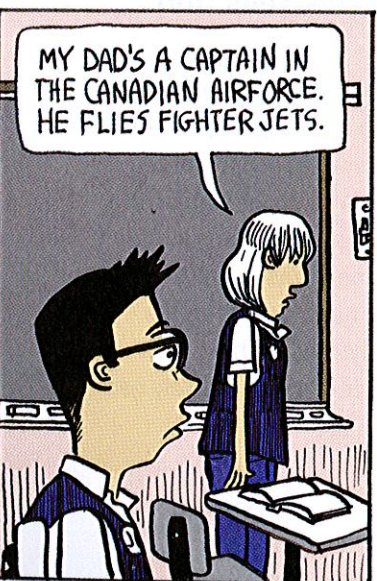
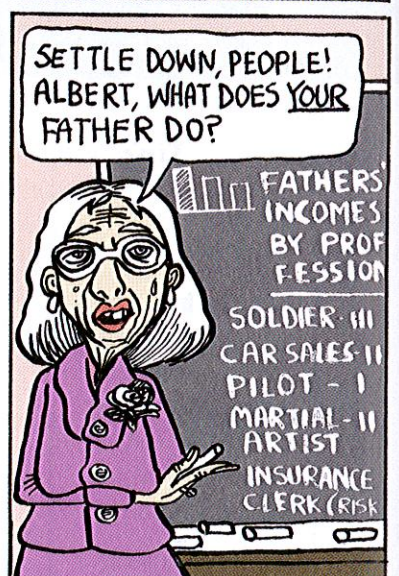
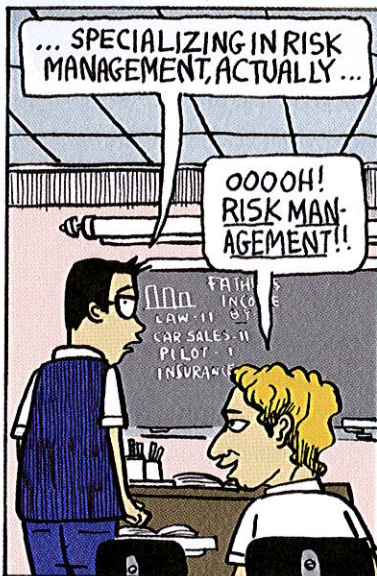
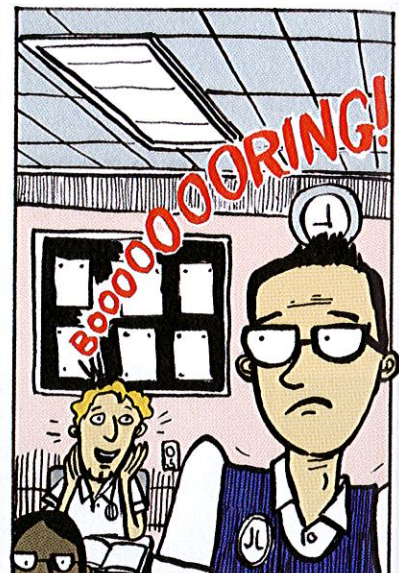
Brainstorm a list of similarities and differences between graphic stories (such as comics or graphic novels) and short stories.

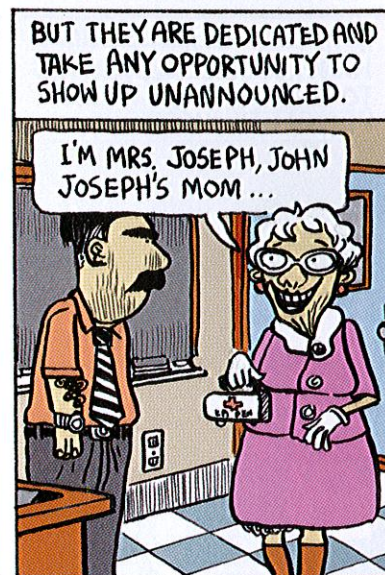
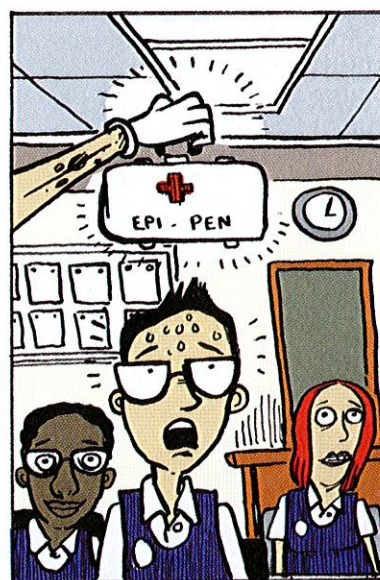
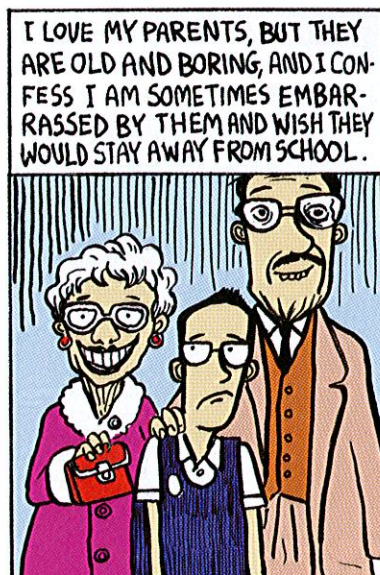
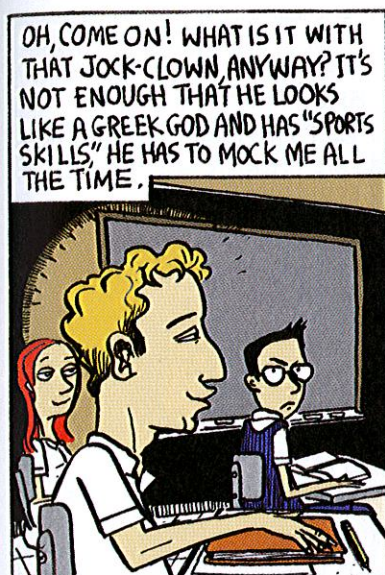
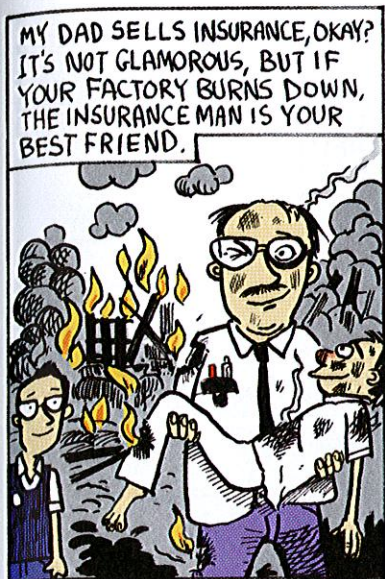
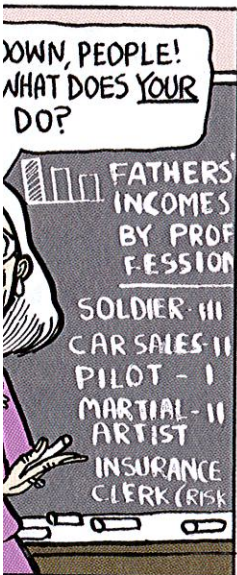
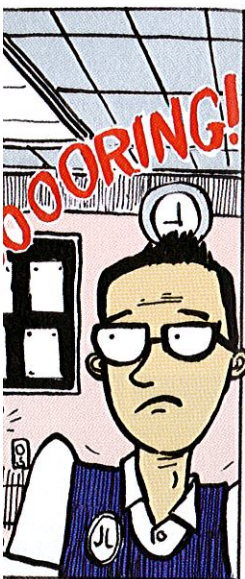
During

In this graphic story, some panels show things that John Joseph is either remembering (as in a flashback) or imagining. As you read, pay attention to the stylistic clues—both in the illustrations and in the narrative boxes—to determine what type of scene you are viewing.

What Inspired Me to Write This Selection

“The kind of awkward, embarrassing incident that happens to the main character in my story happened to me about a million times throughout my school career. To me, the most obvious story to write about high school would include an obsession about some girl who wouldn’t know I existed and me doing some clumsy, idiotic thing in front of that girl. I would have never forgotten the embarrassment of an incident like that in those days. The nice thing about getting older is that you rarely get embarrassed about anything.”





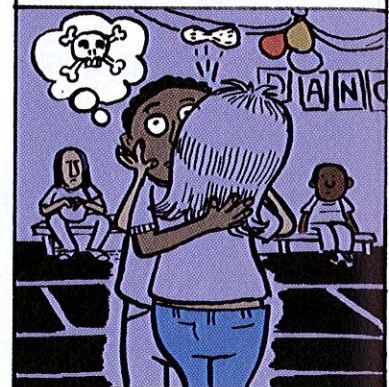
SO, I'M ALLERGIC TO PEANUTS. SCARY, HUH? I MUST REMAIN EVER VIGILANT OF THE DEADLY PEANUT.



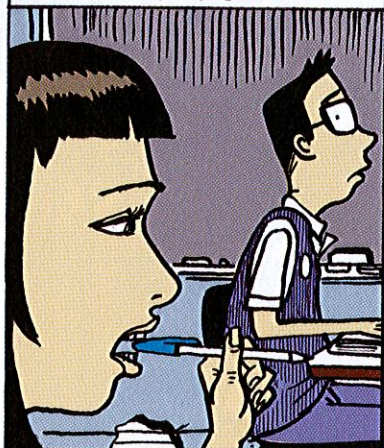
A STUPID PEANUT CAN LITERALLY KILL ME. LIKE IF I WAS A SUPER HERO, MY NEMESIS WOULD BE ... A PEANUT.



IT IS SERIOUS THOUGH. ONCE THERE WAS A KID KILLED BY HIS GIRLFRIEND, BECAUSE SHE KISSED HIM AFTER SHE ATE A PEANUT BUTTER SANDWICH.



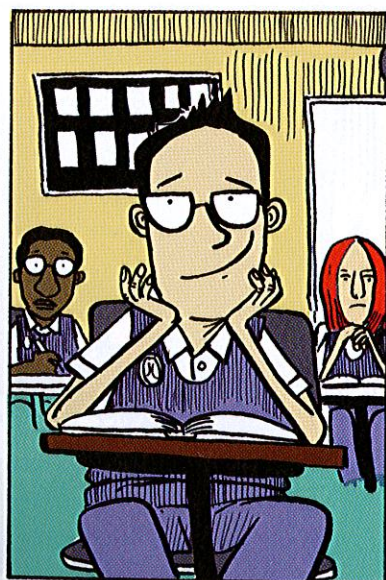
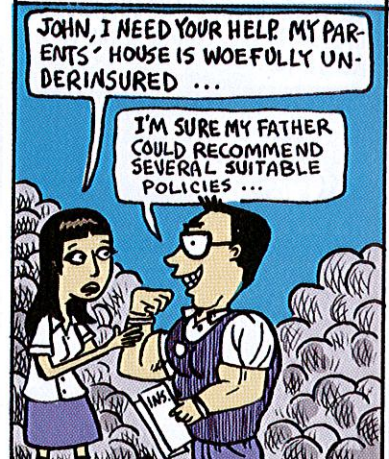
NOT THAT THERE ARE ANY GIRLS HANGING AROUND, WAITING TO KILL ME WITH THEIR PEANUTTY KISSES.



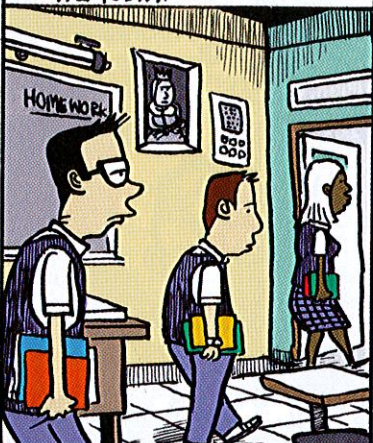
I WOULD GLADLY DIE BY THE KISSES OF TERESA VELENOSI-LIKE THAT COULD EVER HAPPEN.



I HAVE FANTASIES ABOUT SAVING HER FROM A FIRE OR RESCUING HER OR SOMETHING ...



OF COURSE, NO REAL OPPORTUNITY TO ASSIST HER HAS EVER PRESENTED ITSELF UNTIL TODAY.



ERIOUS THOUGH.
ERE WAS A KID
Y HIS GIRLFRIEND,
SHE KISSED HIM
HE ATE A PEANUT
SANDWICH.



NTASIES ABOUT SAVING
A FIRE OR RESCUING
SOMETHING ...

ED YOUR HELP. MY PAR-
SE IS WOEFULLY UN-
ED ...

'M SURE MY FATHER
OULD RECOMMEND
SEVERAL SUITABLE
POLICIES ...



THERE SHE IS AT THE TOP OF
THE STAIRS, STRUGGLING TO OPEN
THE DOOR WITH AN IMPOS-
SIBLE LOAD OF TEXT BOOKS.



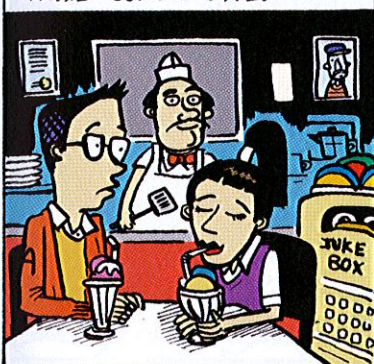
AND NO JOCKS IN SIGHT TO
HELP HER OR TO HUMILIATE ME.



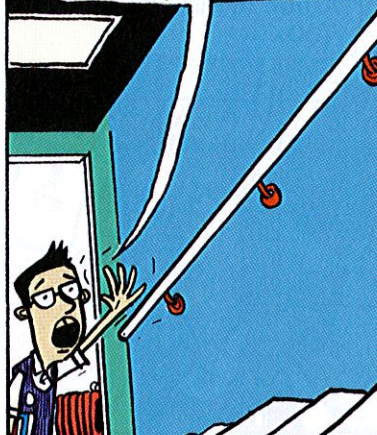
SERIOUSLY, I CAN MAKE
CONTACT HERE!



LIKE MOM SAYS, "IF YOU WANNA
MEET GIRLS, YOU HAVE TO AP-
PROACH THEM. LIKE SHE KNOWS,
SHE PROBABLY THINKS I SHOULD
ASK TERESA OUT FOR A "MALTED"
OR SOME OTHER CLUELESS, 1950'S
ARCHIE COMICS JIVE.



HEY!
HEY, LET ME HELP YOU...
WAIT!



S'OKAY, I GOT IT.



HERE... PUFF...
PUFF-LEMME...
HELP YOU!

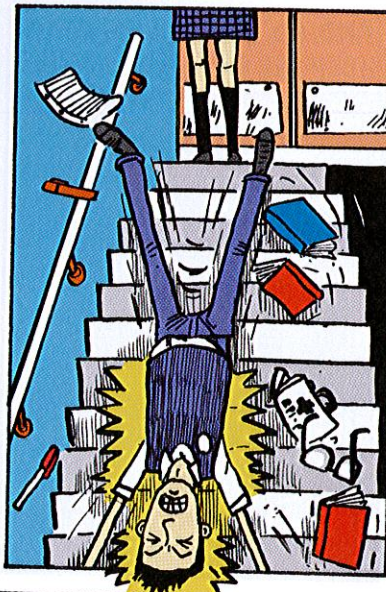


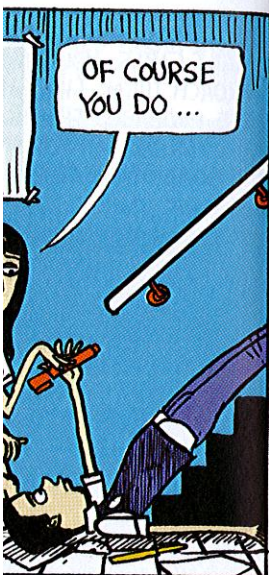
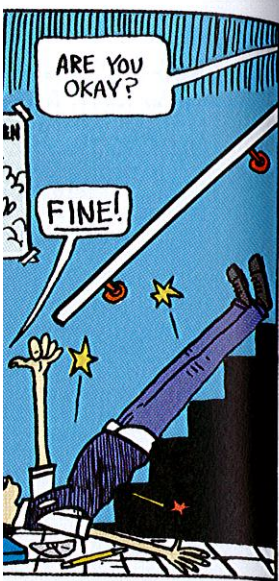
I GOT IT...
THANKS.



HEY, CAREFUL!







After

1. Reading for Meaning

- It could be argued that John Joseph has a good sense of humour, but there are also things about his character that make him funny. Reread the story to find at least three humorous aspects of John Joseph's character.
- What qualities make John Joseph's character easy to relate to?

2. Understanding Form and Style

Certain qualities of the parents, teachers, and students are exaggerated, both in the text and in the illustrations of this story. Describe three instances of this exaggeration. Explain the effect these caricatures have on you, the reader.

3. Understanding Form and Style

How does the author symbolize John Joseph's peanut allergy?

4. Speaking and Listening

With a partner, choose a page of this selection to read aloud. Pay attention to both graphic and language cues to guide your dramatic reading. Reflect these cues with your vocal inflection, facial expressions, and body language. Give feedback to each other on your readings.

5. Viewing and Representing

Choose a panel where there is no text. Use inferencing to explain what is happening in that illustration.

6. Student Voice

In this story, John Joseph uses his sense of humour as a coping mechanism for his problems, such as being made fun of in class, his peanut allergy, and his troubles with girls. Do you think humour is a good way to deal with certain problems? Why or why not?

7. Critical Literacy

How would this story differ if it were told from the jock's point of view or from the girl's (Teresa's) point of view?

8. Metacognition

Do you usually understand a story better when it has illustrations? Why or why not?

Beyond

Reading for Meaning Write the next scene in John Joseph's story using one of the following formats: additional graphic story panels, a script for a TV show, or a short story. Remember to proofread your text and correct any spelling or grammatical errors.